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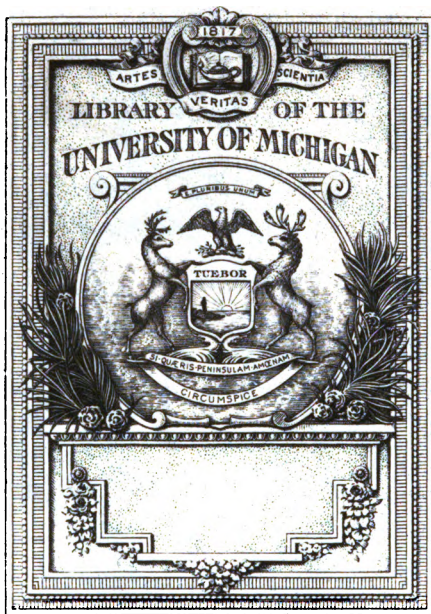
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BY
A

MINISTRY OF FIFTEEN YEARS

IN A

COLLEGE TOWN.

A SERMON

BY

REV. J. T. SUNDERLAND.

ANN ARBOR, MICH.

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A MINISTRY OF FIFTEEN YEARS IN A COLLEGE TOWN.

To one who has reached middle life there begins to be something pathetic in the thought of the hurrying years.

To youth the flight of time is a desire and a delight, rather than the opposite. The boy longs for manhood—thinks it glorious to be approaching that consummation of human hopes. The young man is eager to get into the bustle, stir and conflict of middle life. But when the conflict has been carried on for a few years, until the vista before begins perceptibly to shorten and that behind to lengthen, then a change comes, and the birthdays begin to have a touch of sadness in them, as we wonder why they hurry so fast to meet us.

Ah! time is our mystery of mysteries in this world. We cannot understand it; we can only stand dumb in its presence, and stretch out imploring hands to it as it steals our years away. Our only possible compensation, if not our only possible alleviation, is to be found in the consciousness of spending the years, as they pass, for worthy and useful ends. Thus only can we get out of them the eternal gold that lies in their heart.

Such thoughts as these crowd inevitably on my mind as I rise before you this morning, to remembering that we have been fifteen years together as pastor and people.

Fifteen years is not a short time even in the history of a church. But in the working life of a man it is a long time. I cannot therefore find it in my heart to pass over such an anniversary as the present one without notice. May I not trust that the spending of the half hour that is before us in looking back thoughtfully over the years of our common life and labor, may not be unwelcome to you.

The recollections of these fifteen years naturally divide themselves into three groups: one group gathering about the town, or the community, as a whole; another about the University; and the third about our own church. Can we do better than let our thoughts take this order?

1. I have always felt that Ann Arbor was a place of peculiar attractiveness and charm, entirely aside from its educational advantages. No, not quite *always* have I felt so, either. The first time I came here was in mid-winter, when the weather was particularly inclement and dreary. At that time I was not attracted to the place. But the next time I came was in mid-summer, and then I saw how beautiful it was. The impression formed then has grown and deepened from that day to this.

I have travelled a good deal, and at one time or another visited nearly every town and city of importance in New England, the Middle States and the Central West, but always I have come back saying, Nowhere do I find a combination more satisfactory than in beautiful Ann Arbor, with its tree-shaded streets, its pleasant homes, its well kept yards, its plateau lifted up by nature as if on purpose for a town, its fine surrounding hills, its swift river confined within picturesque bluffs, and all set in the midst of a section of country as fertile and as pleasing to the eye as the sun of our northern land shines on.

The changes in Ann Arbor wrought within these fifteen years have been many. In resident population it has increased about one-third; in student population it has more than doubled. This means that there has been considerable building going on all the while,—indeed our best residences have a large portion of them been erected during this decade and a half. Fifteen years ago our court house was not finished—though it was nearing completion; and taking the place, as it did, of a building so small and poor, it was probably the greatest single improvement in the architectural line known to our history.

The opening of the Toledo and Ann Arbor railway falls within my memory as a resident here.

The construction of the motor railway line to our neighboring city of Ypsilanti, falls within the last third of the fifteen years, as does that of our own electric street railway.

About the middle of the fifteen years came the lighting of our streets by electricity, instead of by gas—a great advance. Near the same time came our city water works, a still greater improvement, though lacking much of giving us the perfect water supply that was promised. The repeated derelictions of the water company is one more lesson added to the hundreds and thousands of similar ones in this country, which ought at last to open the eyes of the American people to the wisdom

of the municipal ownership of all such local monopolies as water, gas, and the like.

One of the great improvements of the fifteen years is our excellent fire department. I recollect that one of the curiosities that first attracted my attention on my arrival here was the old fire engine, trundled about the streets by hand, by volunteer firemen, and operated by hand, and about as effective in putting out a fire as an woman with a tea-kettle.

Ever since we have had a public water supply there has been a constant agitation of the very important subject of sewers, and it is gratifying that at last it has been settled that we are to have them. They cannot fail to be a benefit to the public health, and to add much to the desirableness of Ann Arbor as a place of residence.

For years after I came here every one went to the post-office for his mail. But our free delivery system, which now we could not do without, came at last, though not until after many efforts to secure it.

I have spoken of the growth of the town in population, and the steady improvement that has been made in our buildings. Accompanying these there has naturally been a considerable extension of area, in various directions, so that the city extends now over probably twice as much ground as it did fifteen years ago.

At that time our beautiful Forest Hill Cemetery was spoken of as new, and was quite out of town. But now the town has crept up close to it, and is even spreading beyond it. And alas! how fast, too, has increased the population of that quiet city of the dead!

Since the old cemetery, between Huron and Washington streets, required to be removed, it was fitting that its ground should be made a public park. It is so central and accessible that it will always be an ornament and a benefit to the city. I cannot help regretting, however, that it could not have been extended so as to take in the small and steep but picturesque hills and valleys to the east, north and south, including that unsightly pool of stagnant water, known as the "cat-hole", now a public nuisance and a hindrance to the growth of that part of the city, but so easily capable of being transformed into a pretty pond, one of the most attractive features of the public park that ought to surround it. There is no greater wisdom in the management of a city than that which looks out in time for the addition of parks and open squares and features of permanent public

attractiveness. Sometime it will be seen, even more clearly than it is now, what lasting public benefactors were the men who laid out that charming walk and drive around Cedar Bend, which we have christened as the Boulevard. But it should not stop where it does. That alone is a mere fragment. It should be extended to take in the whole circle of bluffs that line both sides of our river valley. Then we should have one of the most varied, lovely and picturesque drives to be found anywhere in the west. And such a drive would greatly hasten the time, sure to come sooner or later, when all our bluffs and hills will be crowned with fine residences.

Turning from the material to the spiritual side of our progress made during the fifteen years past, it is interesting to notice the steady growth and development of our public schools, the establishment of our prosperous School of Music, the enlargement of the literary activities of the city in many ways, and especially the much earnest work that has been done to promote the moral welfare of the community.

Probably the most unsatisfactory side of the moral life of Ann Arbor during these years, is that which has had to do with the matter of temperance. Not that we have had more intemperance here than in the average town of this size. I think we have not had more. But with our student population and our important educational interests we ought to have had far less. Indeed we ought to have had none at all. The greatest blot upon our city's fair name has been and is our saloons. These are the community's worst foe, the University's worst foe. We have done much in these fifteen years in the way of effort to get rid of them. We have tried to get prohibition in the state, and have failed. We have tried to get local option in the county, and have failed. We have talked a good deal and worked a little in the direction of trying to get the legislature to protect the University, and perhaps the other state institutions of learning, by forbidding the sale of liquor within a radius of five miles around them. This movement seemed at first to have some promise in it. The faculty and friends of the Normal School at Ypsilanti seemed ready to join us in our effort. But when a little opposition and a few obstacles arose in our way we grew discouraged and rather weakly abandoned the movement. I cannot but hope that it will sometime be revived again, and with sufficient courage and determination to carry it to success.

We ought to be spurred to increased effort by the fact

that some of the other leading university towns of the country have fought the saloon battle and have conquered.

Several years ago Cambridge, the seat of Harvard University, a city five or six times as large as Ann Arbor, went into the contest for prohibition, and after a very hard fight won the victory and closed every saloon.

Ithaca, the seat of Cornell University, after a struggle which lasted years, carried the day for prohibition.

Oberlin has prohibition. Evanston, the seat of the Northwestern University, has prohibition. The new University of Chicago is located I believe in the prohibition district of Hyde Park.

Ann Arbor ought to follow the good examples set her. If she refuses to close her saloons she puts the University here under serious disadvantage as compared with these other institutions; for there are few parents who, as between two universities of equal merit, will not choose the one where there are no saloons with their temptations.

Of course it is gratifying that there is as much temperance sentiment in Ann Arbor as there is. It is gratifying that there is all the while so much temperance sentiment in the University. But no one who is a friend either to the University or the town should rest for a moment so long as the curse and blight of a single saloon remains in our midst.

There are a great many other things looking to the moral elevation of society which a retrospect over the last fifteen years shows that we need. But I must take time to mention only one more.

We need less partizanship and less corruption in our city politics. These two things go hand in hand. So many men are partizans first and temperance men second! partizans first and citizens second! making the moral interests of the community subordinate to the success of a party ticket, and often a party ticket made up of shamefully worthless nominees. Must this partizanship in city elections go on? Or has the next fifteen years something better for us? I am happy to say that as the result of some earnest calling of public attention to this matter there have been of late some signs of improvement. Let us each do what we can to push it forward. It is the unanimous voice of our wisest statesmen and students of social and political economy everywhere that municipal politics should everywhere be divorced from state and national politics, and should be carried on distinctly and solely with the interests of the municipality in view, since the

problems of municipal management are almost wholly different from those of state and national politics. If we can thoroughly inaugurate this reform in Ann Arbor it will be of immense service to the city politically, financially and morally. If our Municipal League organized a year ago will lead vigorously in this direction it will put the whole community under obligation to it.

A word about the churches and the religious life of the city during the years of my acquaintance with it. Since I came two or three new religious societies have been organized, and three or four societies have built new houses of worship. There have not been many revivals, so called, but there has been what I suspect is always much better, namely, much steady, quiet, faithful religious work, and a consequent steady and healthy prosperity in the churches. All the churches of the city have been steadily active, and active in many ways. All have carried forward with zeal their own local, home work, and at the same time all have been generally active in discharging their duties of watch-care over the students of their faith who were here in attendance upon our institutions of learning. And so the religious life of the town has been good. I doubt if there are many towns in which the church attendance has averaged higher in proportion to the population, or where the influence of the churches has been relatively stronger.

I may be mistaken, but I think I can see indications of some theological progress, some slight lowering of sectarian walls and fences, some little softening of religious prejudices, some perceptible increase of charity and the spirit of brotherhood among the churches of the city, during these fifteen years. For example, I think that the line between Protestant and Catholic is a little less sharp than it was fifteen years ago; and also that the line between orthodox and liberal is a little less sharp. This is something. But there is room for a good deal of improvement still.

It is something that the different evangelical churches are so cordial toward each other, and are willing to hold union meetings and in other ways co-operate. But may we not hope that the time will come when this fraternity and this co-operation shall be made as wide as Christianity, instead of being limited to the evangelical name? In nearly all of these fifteen years we have had an annual union Thanksgiving service in the city. Why in that service should there not be a union of all, or of all who are willing to join? Why at least should

not the invitation be to all? Is only one church or group of churches under the loving care and providence of God, so that they alone need to voice their gratitude for the year's blessings? May not Christians worship and sing and be thankful together even if they cannot recite the same creed? It seems as if we ought to learn a lesson from the great Parliament of Religions. There "Baptist and Brahman, Presbyterian and Parsee, Methodist and Moslem" worshipped side by side; and nobody was injured, but all were made better men because for a time they forgot their more superficial differences in their deeper agreements. With such an example before us, surely in Ann Arbor all of us who claim to be Christians ought to be willing at least once a year to sing and thank God together, even if some of us do call ourselves liberal Christians and some orthodox Christians. Will not this come before another fifteen years has passed away?

It is something that during all these years the ministers of the town have been able to work together with much good feeling in charitable enterprizes, in temperance, and in social reforms. But why stop with these? Is it not about time to add religion? Why can we not have a regular weekly minister's meeting to which the Unitarian minister and the Catholic minister shall be invited? Even if we don't all think alike, is not that the very reason why we should come together to compare notes, to learn from each other, and to cultivate that greatest of all the Christian graces, charity?

II. I pass now to a few thoughts connected with the history of the University during the fifteen years of my residence here.

I have already said that the student attendance has more than doubled in this decade and a half. I recollect that when I came the University enrollment was eleven or twelve hundred, and that was so far beyond almost any other institution in the land, that people were amazed at it. But it has gone on increasing from year to year until last year it rose to twenty-six or twenty-seven hundred. Nor has this increase been caused by a lowering of standards, but it has been achieved simultaneously with an elevation of standards in most departments.

Four years ago it was my fortune to spend some time in England. On visiting Oxford I took pains to compare the courses of study in the literary colleges there, and the requirements there for matriculation and for degrees, with our courses of study and our requirements for matriculation and for degrees

here. And I found, to my surprise, that a degree there, in England's most renowned University, meant as a rule, pretty nearly a year less of work than it means in Michigan University. You may be sure that I came home prouder than I had ever been of an institution in which such work was being required and done.

Many of the best buildings of the University have been erected during these years,—among them the Museum, the main Library, the Physical and Physiological, and Mechanical Laboratory buildings, large additions to the Chemical, Civil Engineering and Law buildings, the two Hospitals, and the Gymnasium—a long and important list for so short a period of time.

Two considerable plots of ground have been bought by the University within the same period—that on which the Hospitals have been erected, and the Athletic Field. The first of these it is to be hoped has ended forever the periodic agitation of the question of the removal of a part or all of the Medical Department of the University to Detroit; and the second has kindled a new and wider interest among the students in athletic sports and physical culture,—a kind of culture which in the past has been quite too much overlooked.

Nothing in connection with the University has more interested me in these years than the experiment in co-education, which it has been working out. Educated myself in a college where young women were not allowed, I observed the results here closely, and for a time with some uncertainty. But I must confess that the uncertainty has passed away. After fifteen years of the closest possible watching of the experiment on all its sides and in all its bearings, I am convinced that the highest and truest form of college education for both young men and young women is co-education. It is beneficial to the young women; it is equally beneficial to the young men. It refines and ennobles both. It gives each juster views of the other. It fits each better for life.

I must say, however, that I see what seems to me one serious lack in the form which co-education, up to this time, has taken here. That lack appears in the absence of women in the University Faculty of Instruction. Thus our co-education as yet is only partial and one-sided. To make it complete and rounded, I cannot but believe that all these young women and these young men should come under the influence and instruction, during these formative student years, not of men only, but also of wise, cultured and noble women.

Of only one thing more in connection with the University have I time to speak. That is its moral and religious life. In this I have naturally felt a deeper interest than in anything else. Of course, of anything looking like sectarianism within the University's walls, I have been jealous. But with everything calculated to strengthen the moral life of the students, or to deepen their reverence for religion in its purer and higher aspects, I have been profoundly in sympathy.

It has been gratifying to see so many of the professors caring for religion, regularly attending and supporting the various churches, and active in various ways in religious work. This is as it ought to be. It has been gratifying and encouraging to find so cordial relations existing between the churches and the University, and so many students attending the different churches. Of course, I have been most glad to find young men and women accepting the form of faith that seems to me truest, and attending religious services here. But to those who cannot accept our gospel and who do accept another, I have ever said, Go where you belong, and God bless you; help support the church you believe in; do what in you lies to make that church a moral power in the community, and in the lives of the students who attend it.

It has been gratifying to see growing up within the past few years a new form of relationship between the churches of the city and the students. I refer to that effected by the erection of church houses or guild buildings, to serve as social headquarters for the students connected with the various religious denominations. Harris and McMillan halls, with their excellent appointments of libraries, reading rooms, gymnasiums, social rooms, halls for public assembly, and so forth, have been built and fitted up by the Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches of the state, and steps have been taken by one or two other denominations looking in the same direction. We may well wish that this movement may go on until every important denomination in the country, our own included, shall have a religious home for its students here. Naturally each denomination desires to throw around its own young people such protection as it can. How much better that it should send them to a place like this where they may have the many-sided advantages of a great University, and then give them the protection of a religious home here, than to do them the life-long injustice of compelling them to get their education at a small sectarian college, where the horizon of thought is necessarily limited in so many ways.

But during all the years of my Ann Arbor life there has existed here another organization coming still nearer to the students than the churches, and possessing perhaps larger opportunities for influencing their moral and religious lives. I mean the Students' Christian Association. In its career therefore I have felt a very deep interest from the beginning. Again and again, as the years have gone on, I have been stirred and thrilled as I have thought of the almost unparalleled opportunities for doing good that were offered to it as a religious association existing in the midst of so great a body of students. And I have most earnestly longed to see it fully alive, awake, faced to the sunrise, equal to the great demands and responsibilities resting upon it.

In its earliest days I believe the Association stood upon a somewhat broad basis. But about the time I came here it made a change, and since then has admitted nobody to full membership except members of evangelical churches. As a result, its work has of course been religiously narrow in its scope, confining itself mainly to prayer meetings and bible classes of the old type, and hence reaching only a small part of the students, and failing to be anything like so great a moral power in the University as it ought to have been.

But last year, under the leadership of its more advanced men, it took a long step ahead. A strong effort was made to open its doors fully to all students who loved the Christian ideal and were animated by the Christian purpose; that is, to change the Association from a merely evangelical organization, and make it what according to its name it ought always to have been, *the Christian Association* of the University—an organization whose aim should be to gather into itself the *entire Christian life* of the students. The effort was partly successful; but only partly. Like so many good movements it ended in a compromise. Membership was opened to all Christians without respect to sect or name. But the leading offices and the central management of the association were kept still in the hands of persons of the evangelical, or trinitarian orthodox, faith. This change was good, as far as it went, but it did not go far enough.

It was so great an advance, however, over the old, that it is already bearing fruit in a gratifying enlargement of work. The activities of the Association are being planned this year on a much broader scale and in a much more inclusive spirit than ever before. The social work which the Associ-

ation is doing is altogether admirable. The opportunities for Bible study offered are particularly large and varied.

But here limitations appear. So far as I see, all this Bible study is in classes under distinctly orthodox instruction. Liberal Christianity has always led in the world's Biblical scholarship. More and more are liberal views of the Bible justifying themselves at the bar of the higher biblical criticism. The Student's Christian Association should recognize this, and open its doors to biblical instruction and study upon liberal lines as well as upon orthodox and evangelical lines.

Of course I am profoundly appreciative of the advance which the Association has made. But I want it to go further. I want it to advance into the clear sunlight of an absolutely broad and inclusive Christianity. Will it do this? Can it do this while standing on its present only half-broad basis? With its control wholly in orthodox hands, will liberal students find themselves enjoying equal freedom with their orthodox brothers? Will their thought be made fully welcome? *Can* it be? Will liberal speakers be invited to speak in the meetings of the association, and to speak freely their liberal views as evangelical speakers are invited to speak freely their evangelical views? And, as I have already suggested, amidst the extended provisions that are made for Bible study under evangelical instruction, will provision be made, or allowed, for such study under liberal instruction? The answer to these questions I shall await, as you all will await, with deep interest and solicitude.

But of no future thing do I feel more confident than that some time, sooner or later, our great University, absolutely unsectarian by the very fact that it belongs to the State, will have an association as broad and inclusive as its entire religious life. May that good time come soon! And may that association be the enlarged and glorified present Students' Christian Association!

III. This brings me to the third and last division of my subject—those recollections of my Ann Arbor years which cluster about this church, this religious home of ours, our own work. Naturally, these recollections are the most numerous of all, and such as lay closest to my heart. It would have been easy to fill the whole hour with these alone. But perhaps that would not have been so profitable, as to take in, as we have done, the wider sweep of vision. We began our work together, as pastor and people, in the old wood church on the corner of Fifth and Ann streets—a notable building in

the history of Ann Arbor, because it had been so long occupied by the First Methodist Society, and in an earlier day used through many years as the place for holding the Commencements of the University. Before I came the Unitarian Society had occupied the building perhaps a dozen years as its first church home. It was there that my predecessor, Rev. Charles Brigham, did his faithful and able work. It was not strange, therefore, that you became attached to the place, as I did also in the four years of my ministry there. But the building was old and cold, and not well located, and unsightly, and we were all glad when the time came that we could have another, more centrally situated, more comfortable and attractive, more a home than that could ever be. All of you who were with us then know what it cost of courage, of determination, of self-sacrifice, of toil and burden-bearing together to get the beautiful new home. We built our very hearts into its walls. You remember it all, and I think none of you regret a dollar of the money spent or an hour of the loving labor given. We remember, too, with gratitude the help that came from so many friends outside.

This substantial and beautiful church building, then, with its furnishings and appointments for carrying on a many-sided religious work, is one of the achievements of our years together.

Another is the parsonage, next door to the church, built and now entirely paid for.

Another is our fine and growing church library.

Another, if I may speak of it here, and I think I fittingly may, for it could not have been done without your sympathy, encouragement, and permission to use the time necessary for its attainment—another work of these years has been the establishment and successful carrying on for eight years now of the *Unitarian*, the magazine with which you are so familiar, which every month carries the word of your pastor and of so many others to a congregation of many thousands, scattered from Maine to California, from Ann Arbor to England and India and Japan.

It is easy to see that the work done by a minister in a college town like ours must be in important respects different from that of the ordinary minister. Or rather it must be that of the ordinary minister with an important *plus*. We have here two parishes. One is the local parish, which has essentially the same needs as those of parishes generally. The other is the large student parish, made up of some hundreds of

young men and women, away from home, spending the important years of their college life here. The needs of this parish are peculiar. These young people come here strangers. They must be searched out, helped to acquaintance, and into a social life that will be both pleasant and elevating. They must be protected as far as practicable from the temptations and dangers that everywhere confront the young who are away from home and home influences. They must be helped in their moral and religious culture,—a kind of culture not less important than the intellectual, and that ought to go ever hand in hand with it. Especially urgent is the help required by many of them in their efforts to find a basis of religious faith that is rational and stable, amidst the theological overturnings of our time.

I have tried to keep constantly in mind the needs—often the very different needs—of these two parishes, and to shape my work as well as I could with a view to both.

We have carried on all these years our regular Sunday morning and evening services, for purposes of worship, religious instruction, and moral and spiritual quickening. By means of these services we have sought to deepen and purify our own lives, to lift up noble ideals before the young men and women who were with us, and to let shine in the community the light of a religious faith that we believe to be true and uplifting. We have tried ever to wed faith and intelligence. We have endeavored ever to make reason religious and religion reasonable.

As a rule the Sunday morning service has had in view primarily the home parish; and yet the students have never failed to come mornings in such numbers as to make up nearly fifty per cent. of our congregations. The evening services have generally been shaped primarily for the students, and here therefore the thoughts of education and instruction have been a little more prominent than otherwise they would have been. Thus the evening discourses have naturally fallen to a greater or less extent into series. And since to my thought religion is something very large, covering the whole upper side of man's life, therefore it is not strange that these courses of evening sermons have as the years have gone on reached out and included a somewhat wide range of subjects,—some of them doctrinal, some historical, some biographical, some ethical, some practical, some dealing with the Old Testament, some with the New, some with the life and teachings of Jesus and the origin of the Christian church, some with comparative religion, some

with Liberal Christianity in its various forms, some with general religious progress, some with philanthropies and social reforms, some with student life, some with character building, many with questions of current religious thought.

Of course these series of sermons have awakened different degrees of interest, but it has been gratifying to find many of them crowding our place of worship from the opening discourse to the closing, stirring large numbers of young men and women to more earnest thinking, and producing effects, traces of which have continued to come to me for years.

But we have not stopped with our Sunday services. To us a church is more than a pulpit, however important the work of the pulpit may be; and religion is larger than Sunday, however well that priceless day may be spent. My own idea of a church has always been of something many-sided, touching life at many points, helpful in many ways, with places in it for old and young, something for all to learn, work for all to do, ideals for all to strive after. We have tried to make ours such a church as this—our common religious home, our common school of truth, our common sanctuary. To enable us to carry into practical realization this large and many-sided conception of the church and of religion, we have found it necessary to employ many agencies—the book, the tract, the religious periodical, the Sunday school, the Bible class, the religious study class of various kinds, the Unity Club, the lecture course, the boys club, the sewing school, the Young Men's Guild, the King's Daughters organization, the young people's religious meeting,—all these besides the regular Sunday service.

Some of these agencies are so important that I ought to say a separate word about them.

First the Sunday school. We are quite too apt to think of all Sunday school work as of slight value. But as a fact our Sunday school work throughout all these years has been planned as carefully as the work of our public schools, with the aim in view steadily not only of cultivating the religious nature of the children, and forming helpful friendships and associations between them and their Sunday school teachers, but also with the aim of giving to them systematic instruction in the Bible—its stories, its biographies, its history, the origin and growth of its various books, its ethical and religious teachings; and then beyond this Bible knowledge, instruction also in religious history, in religious doctrines, in the lives of noble men and women of all time, in temperance, in kindness to animals, in duties at home, duties at school, duties to society, duties to

God,—in short in all the more important lines of knowledge which tend to build up character, and lay in the young the basis for a pure, noble and enduring religious faith. Is such work as this to be lightly esteemed?

Our Students' Bible Class work too, carried on nine months of each year, has, in this decade and a half, covered a wide range of studies, in Biblical history and criticism, in comparative religion, in religious philosophy, in religious biography, in the history of Christianity, in the growth and principles of the different sects, in ethics, in charities and in philanthropies. I think we can hardly over-estimate the value to young men and women of such instruction as this, given conscientiously and steadily right on from year to year through the period of their lives when their characters are forming, and when their moral and religious principles and ideals are being shaped. I speak of the class the more freely because for the past thirteen years it has been taught not by me but my wife. Most of you know the heart and the enthusiasm, only a few of you know the labor, she has put into her task all these years. It is gratifying to know that the class has met with such constant favor and success. Sixty, seventy, eighty, a hundred, and sometimes more than a hundred, keen young minds, all alert for truth, coming together month after month and year after year for the study of the most important subjects connected with human life, may well be an inspiration to the teacher, and a cause for rejoicing to us all who love the truth and believe that it is by the truth that men are to be saved.

An association whose work has been indispensable to our church life throughout nearly all our history since I have known you, has been our Ladies' Union. I shall never forget that it was this organization of our women that took the first heroic step to raise funds for the new church home. The work of building, and especially the work of furnishing the new home when built, must have been seriously delayed but for its never-failing activity and devotion. Nor did its usefulness cease with the completion of the new church. It has always been an important agency in the social, charitable, helpful, and intellectual life of the church. The courses of study that it has carried on for the last ten or a dozen years have been almost as varied and wide as those of the Bible class.

For the past half dozen years our large King's Daughters association, made up of Unitarian young ladies both of the

town and the University, has been one of the most efficient and satisfactory of our organizations,—its work being social, helpful, and religious.

Our Young Men's Guild is also an association from which we hope much,—its aim being to draw all the young men within our reach into acquaintance and comradeship, and to carry on various lines of practical religious work.

Our Unity Club, organized the first month of my ministry here, and hence now fifteen years old, has been through all this period perhaps the chief representative on the one hand of our social life, and on the other of our literary or intellectual, as distinguished from our religious life. Who can tell the value of the work it has done, in binding our young people together, in bringing students into acquaintance with us, in furnishing to all, old and young, facilities for social intercourse of the very best kind, in stimulating intellectual activity among us all; and in reaching a hand of fraternity out across sectarian lines, to touch and draw into friendly relations with us many outsiders, many members of other churches, who would not come to our religious services, but who would come to our Unity Club lectures, literary meetings, concerts and socials. Thus, with all the rest, it has been a constant silent influence in the city to soften religious prejudices, and draw people of different religious names into a little more friendly relations.

Finally, our Library, Reading Room, and tract distribution work, have supplemented all other activities by bringing to their aid, all the while, the printed page, thus appealing to the eye as well as the ear, reaching the homes of many who are never seen inside our church walls, finding entrance into hundreds of students' rooms, and carrying the message of our liberal gospel on the wings of the postal service over hill and valley, land and sea, to every part of our own country, and to many a land besides.*

*In our tract distribution work a constant and indispensable source of supply has been the American Unitarian Association, Boston, which has every year sent us its tracts in large quantities and without charge. We have also used many printed sermons of Dr. James Freeman Clarke, Rev. M. J. Savage, Rev. John W. Chadwick, Rev. Brooke Herford, Rev. Joseph May, Dr. E. E. Hale, and others of our leading ministers; some Unity Mission tracts and pamphlets, from Chicago; and a considerable quantity of Universalist tracts kindly furnished, at our request, by the Universalist Publishing House, Boston, Rev. Lee S. McColester, Detroit, and others. All these have been supplemented by a large and constantly renewed home supply. A partial list of my own tracts

A few words now about the more distinctively student side of our church work, and I shall have done.

I well know there are persons in the community who deny to us as a church the Christian name; who call us destroyers of the Bible, and enemies of religion; who point to that which we are doing among the young men of the University as a work of skepticism and infidelity. What shall we say to such? Shall we reply to them in anger? Not so. Such persons are to be looked upon with sorrow, not with bitterness. They little know what they say. The truth is, the work of this church which rises in importance perhaps above any other, is that of defending Christianity, saving the Bible, showing that faith has everlasting foundations on which to build, making skepticism and infidelity impossible among young men and women by showing them a form of religion that is self-evidencing—a form so natural, so reasonable, so inherently excellent and true that they can no more reject it than they can reject the beauty of the lily, the fragrance of the rose, the charm of music, the truth of mathematical axioms, or the voice of conscience in the soul.

Of all the memories of the fifteen years past none are so precious as those which call to mind the great numbers of

and sermons printed and circulated during these years is as follows: What do Unitarians Believe? The Origin and History of Unitarianism; Who are Liberal Christians? Principles of Liberal Christianity; The Better Religion Coming; Is Inquiry in Religion Safe? Must we Accept the Whole Bible, or None? The Higher Conception of God; True and False Liberalism (printed first privately, later issued as a tract by the A. U. A); Who are Saved? Selections from the Standard Creeds of Orthodoxy; Religious Insincerity; Channing; James Freeman Clarke; Robert Ingersoll; Thomas Paine; Giordano Bruno; Talmage; The Good and Evil in the Teachings of Mr. Moody; The Great Unities of the Unitarian Faith; The Revised Version of the Bible; Unitarianism and Christianity; Prayer; Religion as an Experience; Conversion; The Issue in the West, or the Need of Planting Unitarianism upon a Theistic Basis; Temperance Reform; The Duty of Patriots in a Time of Peace (a Grand Army Sermon); How to Grow Beautiful; The Opening of the World's Fair on Sunday; Making Preparation for the October of Life; Duties and Opportunities of Educated Young Women; Sowing and Reaping. These tracts and sermons, while printed primarily for use in connection with the Ann Arbor work, have also been ordered in larger or smaller quantities by ministers, churches and postoffice committees for use in other places. The number printed of each has ranged from 1,000 to 10,000, except in two cases, where it has gone higher—the tract on the History of Unitarianism having reached its fifteenth thousand, and that entitled What do Unitarians Believe? its eighty-fifth thousand.

young men and women who, having come to us with their religious faith gone or fast going, through the influence of this church have been helped to faith again, and this time a faith not to be shaken because based on reason and the deepest instincts of the soul. Commonly, perhaps *most* commonly, these young persons have been children of orthodox parents; often they have been church members; sometimes they have been young men studying for the ministry, and even in several cases for the foreign missionary work; but as they passed away from the circumscribed influences of their earlier years into the larger world of independent life, and began to think for themselves and to feel the influence of the scientific spirit of the times, they found one after another of the doctrines of orthodoxy which they had been taught, growing to be no longer possible of belief, and as they had always identified religion with these beliefs, the dreaded conviction slowly but surely forced itself upon them that they must give up religion itself as a superstition.

I could easily fill an hour with accounts of young men who have told me this melancholy story, and assured me that this church has been their religious salvation. When they began coming here they saw no light. They had outgrown the old system of thought and could no more return to it than a hatched birdling could return again into the shell from which it had come out. But here they found a religion which from the first commended itself to them as reasonable, and which, as they studied it further, met fully the demands both of their rational and their spiritual natures. Hardly a week passes in which I do not receive letters from some one or more of the multitude of young men and women who have gone out from us, thanking me in warmest words for that gospel of reason and love and hope which means so much to them, and which they heard for the first time here. Many a young man has come to me at the close of his years of study in this city to say: "You can never know what the Unitarian faith has done for me. It has given me back religion, and religion enlarged, lifted up, ennobled beyond anything I had ever conceived before. It has transformed all my ideals and conceptions of life." Again and again young men going away have said to me with moist eyes and full hearts: "Of all that I have received from these precious years in Ann Arbor, the best, that which I would least willingly part with, has come from this church."

These, friends, are our rewards. These are our answers

to any who say we have no mission of faith and life to the young men and women who come to this city for a home during their years of college training.

Nor should it be forgotten that these students who go out from here carrying in their hearts this larger religious faith, go for the most part to be missionaries of it. I hear from them in all parts of the country. Scores and hundreds of letters come from them asking for liberal tracts to scatter among their friends in the communities where they locate as doctors, lawyers, teachers, editors, fillers of important positions in every walk of life. There is hardly a liberal church in the West or South that does not have one or more of these Ann Arbor graduates as active workers in it. I went last year to exchange pulpits with a brother minister in one of the largest western cities, and found that the chairman of his board of trustees was a man converted to Unitarianism here. I went to another city to exchange with one of the ministers there and found one of my old student helpers the superintendent of the Sunday school. I went to another and found the treasurer of the church, the president of the Unity Club and three or four others workers were from Ann Arbor. A few weeks ago I attended one of our state conferences; the leading trustee of the church where the conference met—the man who had almost made the church—told us that he learned the Unitarian gospel in the Bible class of Mr. Brigham, my predecessor here. The prime movers in starting several of the Michigan Unitarian churches were Ann Arbor students; and the same is true to my knowledge of at least two of the Universalist churches of the state. In the Missouri Valley, churches were started several years ago in two cities not very far apart. The man that sowed the seed of the liberal faith in both cities, and made both churches possible, was one of our students, who had located first in one city then in the other as a teacher. Two state capitals, one in the West and one in the South, have had Unitarian churches planted in them by young men who went out from us here filled with the missionary spirit. As soon as they got themselves established in those cities, one as a lawyer and the other as a physician, they began making inquiries for Unitarians or persons with Unitarian sympathies, and distributing liberal tracts and printed sermons as they found opportunity. In a few months each began inviting such persons as he found interested, to meet for an hour on Sunday in a private parlor to read a sermon and talk together. Thus both worked on

patiently and earnestly in spite of difficulties and discouragements, until at last their efforts were crowned with success and permanent churches were established, one of which has now a good house of worship.

So it is that the leaven of our liberal gospel planted in young minds here is doing its work in scores and hundred of places all up and down the land.

There has been no time for years that we have not had here from one to three students studying with the ministry in view. Some of these are now effective preachers.

Beyond our own country, too, the influence of our work goes. Foreign students who have attended our services here and have become interested in our thought have gone away to carry the good seed of it to China, Egypt, Turkey, Bulgaria, Mexico, Central America, South America, Australasia, various countries of Europe, and I know not how many other lands. Mr. Knapp and Mr. MacCauley have written me from Japan that several of their best helpers there, without whom it would have been difficult to carry on some important departments of their work, are Japanese young men who were taught the Unitarian faith by us in Ann Arbor.

But enough.

Thus we get at least a glimpse, of the work—the many sided, and shall I not say important work, which as pastor and people we have been trying to do together during these fifteen years;—trying to do together for the strengthening of our own moral and spiritual lives; for the religious training of our children; for the elevation of the community in which we live; for the salvation of the young men and women in our institutions of learning who in their search for religious truth look to us for light; for the benefit of the generations coming after us; for the service and glory of Him, over all, who gives us our work to do, and asks us to do it well.

As we look back to the past, do we see that we have failed and come short in much? For this, tears and regret, and the prayer, God forgive! Do we see that we have succeeded in any measure? For this, joy! But let the honor and the praise be to God, to whom it is due a thousand times more than to us.

And now in conclusion, as we turn from the past to the future, to take up the still greater work of the years that are to come, in what spirit shall we go forward? Let it be with

humility and yet with courage; with glad joy, and a more real consecration to our task than we have ever known. To few are given at once such privileges and such responsibilities as to us. Let us strive more earnestly than ever before to be worthy of them.

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